NEW APPROACH TO SAFETY REGULATION FOR
UK AVIATION INDUSTRY

On 5th June the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) released more information about its new approach to the safety regulation of the aviation industry. The CAA had announced its intention to move to a regime of performance based oversight last year, and has now published further details for the airlines, airports and ground handling organisations affected.

The move follows a major industry conference on 19th May in Gatwick, at which the CAA committed itself to regulating in a more proportionate, effective and risk-based way. The regulator explained that performance-based oversight will draw upon information generated by organisations’ own safety management systems, as well as other sources of relevant data, to identify, and then tackle, those areas that generate the greatest risks to safety.

Mark Swan, Director of the CAA’s Safety and Airspace Regulation Group, said, “Although UK commercial aviation has an excellent safety record, we cannot be complacent. Performance based regulation takes our safety oversight to a new level. By working hand-in-hand with the aviation industry, EASA\(^1\) and other national authorities, to identify and manage risk effectively, we can concentrate our attention where it is most needed. I am very confident that the outstanding co-operation we are receiving from industry will ensure the success of this new safety regime.”

The CAA’s transformation to performance based oversight, and what it means in practice, was laid out to 160 senior industry leaders and accountable managers at the Gatwick conference. Delegates were given the opportunity to debate the concept and practicalities, including the likely benefits and the challenges to both the CAA and themselves.

About the CAA
The CAA is the UK’s specialist aviation regulator. Its activities include: making sure that the aviation industry meets the highest technical and operational safety standards; preventing holidaymakers from being stranded abroad or losing money because of tour operator insolvency; planning and regulating all UK airspace; and regulating airports, air traffic services and airlines and providing advice on aviation policy.

\(^1\)The European Aviation Safety Agency.